MANAGING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS:

MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND PROJECT INTERVENTIONS

IN SIX AFRICAN AGRICULTURAL PROJECTS

AID EVALUATION SPECIAL STUDY NO. 38

by

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FOREWORD

Good program management is essential to successful and sustained development programs in developing countries. Problems of poor management are often cited as responsible for program failure. The management factor in development programs is, however, less well appreciated and understood as are the project interventions that serve to strengthen management capabilities. AID's Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE) of the Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination has undertaken a series of studies to gain a better understanding of these management problems and to assess the impact of some of the interventions that have been tried.

The study began in September 1984 when CDIE organized a workshop on development management in Africa. In attendance at that workshop were senior AID personnel, contractors, and university professors knowledgeable about Africa who have written on development management issues. Many in this group at the workshop participated in the field studies of six agricultural development projects in Africa. The product of the workshop was a report that isolated issues and approved a scope of work to guide the field teams.

After returning to the United States, the six field teams attended a wrap-up seminar in May 1985 to review their work and to seek general findings and lessons. Several synthesis reports were written incorporating the results of the field studies and the deliberations of the wrap-up seminar. This present report is one of the syntheses. Irving Rosenthal has been the CDIE coordinator for this series.

> Center for Development Information
> and Evaluation
> Agency for International Development
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SUMMARY

The purpose of this analysis is twofold. First, it will classify and describe a variety of management strategies used to implement six agricultural and rural development projects in Africa. Second, it will classify and describe the interventions that were used in these same projects to improve the management capacities of developing country institutions and individual managers.

The classification of both strategies and interventions is based on a matrix that relates management in three different arenas to five different management activities. The three arenas are the project unit, the related program agencies, and the unit responsible for designing and funding the intervention. The five management activities are leadership, project and program design, organizational and institutional structures, management support systems, and relations with the project environment.

The study draws on six case studies of projects in which the interventions were designed at least in part to improve management. Each cell of the matrix will be examined in turn. For example, one cell deals with project managers as leaders; another, with management support systems. The analysis poses questions such as what problems did project and program managers confront in carrying out each activity; what strategies did they use to cope with their problems; and how did the interventions improve their ability to cope?

The analysis concludes with a series of "if-then" propositions from the cases to serve as hypotheses for future evaluations and project designs. By building on such findings, evaluations can begin to offer some cumulative evidence about the nature of development management and about how interventions can be designed to improve it.

1.   DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

1.1 Introduction

     This study has two purposes. First, it will classify and
describe a variety of management strategies used to implement six
successful agricultural and rural development projects in Africa.
Second, it will classify and describe how these same projects tried
to improve the management capacities of developing country
institutions and individual managers. Strategies are described from
the perspective of host country officials in charge of managing
development activities or donor staff or expatriate contractors
when they are acting in that capacity. The section on interventions
concerns those who design them. This sequence is intentional. It
suggests that the design of management interventions should be
based on an analysis of the ways in which managers in the
developing country context deal with their problems, what
strategies they have tried, and which seemed to work. The qualifier
"management" is also important. The study focuses on how the
projects were managed and how they improved the capacities of host
institutions to manage their activities.

     The analysis is part of recent efforts by the U.S. Agency for
International Development (AID) to take a more systematic look at
development management issues. Development management is emerging
as a pragmatic, conscious field of effort to deal with some issues
that have been ignored in designing development projects. This
effort emphasizes that management is a critical, technical
variable, that how assistance is implemented in the field is as
important as the policy that determines on what the resources are
spent. It emphasizes that the process of development poses
particular challenges for development managers that they ignore at
the risk of undermining their efforts to offer advice and
assistance.

     An emphasis on management assumes that implementing an acti-
vity does not just happen. It needs to be anticipated, thought
about, and encouraged. For example, development management as a
field of study examines whether funds to expand rural development
are spent solely by a ministry located in the capital or whether
beneficiaries and local groups share some responsibility for
planning, implementing, and evaluating the use of those funds. It
considers whether an agency has procedures for reviewing the
results of its activities and whether it considers these results in
its next round of planning. It asks whether there are incentives
for officials to seek out and listen to the poor and whether
beneficiaries have an incentive to maintain a project once it is
completed. These are all questions that concern how a project or
activity is managed. This study examines six agricultural
development projects in Africa to consider what we have

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learned from their management experiences and whether and how the project interventions improved their ability to manage development activities effectively over time.

The discussion of management strategies and enhancement interventions is based on research performed by AID's Center for Development Information and Evaluation (CDIE) of the Bureau for Program and Policy Coordination (PPC) and by the Bureau for Africa.[1] This study included an analysis of 277 projects completed in Africa. Each project was coded according to management problems it encountered and the recommendations it offered. In addition, six agricultural assistance projects in Africa were studied in-depth in the field. External observers who spent approximately a month on-site were asked to focus on how the projects were managed, what was learned about management strategies, and to what extent and how the interventions improved the capacity of host institutions to manage their affairs. A listing of the countries in which the projects were conducted,[2] major substantive purposes, and the implementing agencies is given in Table 1.

1.2 Management Arenas

Development management is performed in different arenas. These include different levels of government--national, regional, or local; different kinds of organizations--public and private; and organizations with different degrees of autonomy. External donor organizations interact with all of these, adding another layer of management activity. The cases analyzed for this study

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[1]One of the lessons learned from these studies is the importance of collaborative management. In this respect it is worth noting that the CDIE staff involved in this study have modeled collaboration throughout the process. Senior staff, consultants, and academics have worked together, brainstorming, providing feedback and suggestions. I am particularly grateful for the considerable time that others have spent thinking out loud with me, commenting on earlier drafts, and meeting with me. Haven North, Irving Rosenthal, Jim Cotter, Jeanne North, Gerald Britan, Joe Lieberson, and Coralie Bryant were particularly helpful with their comments and insights.

[2]The cases are more fully described in the overviews by Honadle (1985) and Rondinelli (1985). The six country evaluations are as follows: Niger (Painter et al., 1985); Kenya (Nicholson et al., 1985); Senegal (Seymour et al., 1985); Zaire (Rosenthal et al., 1985); Liberia (Hermann et al., 1985); lesotho (Warren et al., 1985). See Bibliography for complete references.

involve the use of external assistance to fund projects and address development management in the following three areas.

1. _Projects_. All of the cases describe how specific projects were managed. Some were fairly autonomous, others were more closely integrated into a national ministry. Some were under the control of host personnel; in others, expatriate contractors had much more influence. Despite these variations, the cases provide insights into project management in general. (Project management is discussed in Section 2.)

Table 1. Country, Purpose, and Implementing Agency for Six Agricultural Projects in Africa

Country	Project Purpose	Type of Implementing Agency
Kenya	Upgrade a college providing technical training for extension agents	Autonomous parastatal
Lesotho	Improve land conservation and productive use of livestock	National-level ministry linked to autonomous field sites
Liberia	Improve data analysis and ability of Ministry of Agriculture to do sector planning	National ministry
Niger	Provide technical assistance to improve farm productivity	Line agencies at local government level
Senegal	Introduce irrigation technology and diversify crops	Parastatal subnational organization working with farmer groups
Zaire	Introduce new technology, local organizations, and marketing to improve food production	Semiautonomous project unit

2. _Programs_. In varying degrees, the projects were related to the work of a program agency. Many of the management experiences they report go beyond the actual project and address the broader question of strategies used by host institutions to manage their ongoing programs. Because the projects were prese-

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lected in the agricultural and rural development sector, they concern strategies used by Ministries of Agriculture and Rural Development in managing their programs. (Program management is discussed in Section 3.)

3.   Enhancement Interventions. The cases also deal with management in a third arena, namely the use of externally funded project assistance to improve management. Sections 2 and 3 examine the management strategies used in projects and programs. Section 4 looks at the same cases from a different angle. It assumes that projects are not simply ends in themselves but are also opportunities for enhancing the capacity of host institutions to manage their activities. From this perspective, the projects are interventions to enhance management capacity as well as to improve agricultural productivity. Therefore, this part of the study will consider what the cases indicate about how to use project assistance to improve management.

1.3   Framework for Analyzing Development Management Strategies and Interventions

Having distinguished among managing projects, managing programs, and projects as interventions, the next step is to define the aspects or factors of management most relevant to these three topics. Other reviews of this series of field evaluations have conceptualized management in closely related ways.[3] The five factors of management that follow overlap with these.

1.   Leadership and management style. This set of management factors emphasizes the style of managers, their manner of relating to others, and their ability to energize staff and mobilize supporters outside of the organization. We will examine the cases for information about the importance of leadership, the kinds of leadership that work at the program and project levels, and ways to intervene to enhance leadership.

2.   Program and project design. Both program and project managers are given policy mandates or project goals to carry out. In almost all cases, however, managers have some discretion over

how the mandates or goals are implemented. The process of designing

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[3]For example, in his analysis off these same six evaluations, Rondinelli distinguishes among Policy, Design, Contextual, Organizational Structures, Administrative Procedures and Practices, Management of resource Inputs, and Human Resources Management. Haven North, Director of CDIE, distinguishes among leadership, goal setting, contextual factors, links with political support, links with beneficiaries, obtaining resources, and organizing and administering the resources.

an implementation plan involves reshaping and redirecting the original mandate. Decisions on reshaping policy content and goal definition are important parts of management.

3. <u>Organizational and institutional structure</u>. This set of management factors addresses how an organization is structured to deliver its services or perform its activities. It is concerned with both internal and external structure. How hierarchical is it or how decentralized? Is it organized around specializations or around more general purpose units? Managers generally have some influence over organizational structures and institutions, even though their discretion in this area varies. At the very least, managers of development projects in the field have to decide whether and how a program should be implemented at regional and local levels and how the national ministry should relate to lower level units. Project-level managers have to create structures to link the project with organizations at the national and regional levels and with both public and private community organizations.

4. <u>Management procedures or support systems</u>. Managers also have to design internal procedures to support program or project implementation. These include information systems for monitoring and evaluation, financial management, and personnel systems. Planning and communications are examples of other support systems. What do the cases tell us about using these three types of support systems as management tools? For example, how do their methods of collecting and handling information assist managers in implementing program and project goals? What financial management systems enhance efficiency and effectiveness? What kinds of incentives do personnel or human resources units provide to involve organization members and beneficiaries?

5. <u>Relating to the environment</u>. The environment or context of any development activity provides both resources and con-straints. Managers need to consider both. We will address a series of questions in the review of the cases that deal with their cultural sensitivity and relevance, their ability to marshall support, and how they are linked with beneficiaries. First, how did the managers ensure that the projects were appropriate to the local cultural priorities and values in the community? Second, what sources of support were they able to develop in addition to project assistance? And third, what were their experiences in working and responding to beneficiaries? The latter issue is particularly important when project assistance is intended to change behavior. Such change is almost always implicit in agricultural activities, in which programs and projects are typically designed to get local farmers to try new farming practices, new technology, or new ways of organizing. How did the managers in these six cases respond to community concerns, elicit information from them, or stimulate them to participate?

1.4 A Matrix for Analyzing Management Strategies and Interventions

The matrix in Table 2 relates these three management arenas (i.e., project, program, and interventions) to these five aspects of management (i.e., leadership, program and project design, organizational and institutional structure, internal procedures, and relations with the environment). The items in each cell are examples of the kinds of information that would logically fit in that cell. The remainder of this study reviews the cases to determine the strategies attempted and the lessons learned for each cell.

1.5 Methodology of the Study

Management levels and functions are frequently treated as general abstractions and invite the response, "but that doesn't fit my situation." The value of working from a set of case studies is that they relate general topics to specific events. The study proceeds inductively by describing the management strategies and interventions used in the case studies and relates them to a general framework that applies broadly to management, as outlined in the above matrix. Because the lessons it describes will be limited to the specific efforts in these six cases, some of the cells will contain much richer information than others. Most of the lessons learned from the cases concern project management. Next in frequency are lessons learned concerning interventions; finally, a smaller number of lessons can be gleaned about program management. More attention should probably be given to program management in any follow-on study.

By grounding the lessons in specific cases, it is also possible to relate specific management strategies and interventions to actual problems confronting managers. The study will proceed by identifying the problems that the evaluators describe and then discuss the attempted strategies and interventions. This method links the strategies to the conditions under which they were used and the circumstances that led to their success or failure.

This emphasis on problems suggests that management is more aptly thought of as a set of coping strategies than a neat process of selecting a strategy and applying it generally.[4] It

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[4]Jim Cotter originally suggested the concept of coping strategies in a memo to Irving Rosenthal. In am grateful for the suggestion and for his recommendation that a study of strategies includes an examination of their effects on different beneficiaries and the conditions under which strategies are successful.

implies that management is a continual process of addressing problems, making tradeoffs, and trying to make the most of what one has at hand. This approach warns us not to look for easy, prescribed solutions and not to forget that management is an ongoing and inherently messy process. Managers have to coordinate numerous elements--resources, supplies, existing organizations--and work with a variety of parties, or stakeholders--organization members, agency heads, political elites, community leaders, and clients. Moreover, these parties often have conflicting concerns and interests. A given strategy may benefit one group of stakeholders, even as it disadvantages another. Just listing the variety of those having a stake in an activity and their multiple interests underscores the vitality and uncertainty of the management process.

1.6 Summary

Management is a critical aspect of any development activity. The experiences in six case studies of agricultural assistance in Africa provide examples of some successful strategies used by project and program managers. They also offer insight into how project assistance can be designed to enhance management. Managers engage in a wide range of activities; this study classifies these into five management factor areas: leadership, project and organizational design, management support systems, and relations with the environment.

2. MANAGING DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

2.1 Project Leadership and Management Style

2.1.1   Problems

The projects illustrate that effective management involves leadership in motivating people to fulfill their roles and inspiring them with a sense of direction. The cases suggest two factors impeding effective leadership: style and lack of time.

Management is an effort to work with various parties in situations in which one has very little control and where there is almost always a great deal of uncertainty. In such situations, managers need to persuade others of the merits of an activity, use informal opportunities for persuasion, and convey their own commitment to project goals. One constraint affecting many managers in Africa is that they have learned to be authoritarian from their former colonial masters, or at least to value

hierarchical control. They seem to look for occasions to exert control rather than to consult or negotiate with others. A second problem is that managers in Africa who absorbed the colonial experience of "going by the book" are caught in myriad routines and often have a shortage of trained staff to assist them. Therefore, they have little time or energy left for seeking out resources, establishing good interpersonal relations, or giving sufficient attention to other important management considerations.

2.1.2 Leadership Strategies

The importance of creative and charismatic leadership and the need to inspire and convince others to gain their cooperation are demonstrated by the Niger case. The project director's role was to work with members of service agencies and involve them with the local community to improve farm production. However, they were reluctant to assume new and additional tasks. According to the evaluators, it took "an inordinate amount of time and energy...to inform, coordinate, organize, convince, and occasionally cajole the participating services to become actively involved." These roles are particularly critical when, as in the Niger case, the project director lacks operational authority and has to rely on others to implement the project activities.

One strategy for encouraging leadership is to transfer routine, internal management affairs to someone else. This would free up the principal officer to focus on larger issues. This strategy was successfully used in both Niger and Kenya. In the Kenya project, a professional administrator was assigned to deal with operational problems. The Director was free to address larger substantive issues and to look for external support. The strategy worked in this case because the Director was able to retain enough control over management to ensure a unity of command. The evaluators noted that the project was very well managed and that the Director was effective in seeing that the project fulfilled its purposes. From their perspective, however, the Director did not take full advantage of the relative freedom he was given. Neither the Director nor the person in charge of management addressed some of the long-term management needs raised by the project.

2.1.3 Summary of Leadership Strategies for Project Managers

Project managers should employ at least the following leadership strategies:

--   Use informal means to convince and persuade others. These can be followed up by formal actions that will then encounter less resistance.

--   Delegate management to a deputy project manager to provide room for leadership.

2.2   Project Goals and Objectives

2.2.1   Problems

Project goals can range from broad policy statements, such as "improve farmer productivity," to more specific ones, such as "improve the irrigation of crops in the area." When goals are broad and multiple, the problem for project managers is to translate them into more specific and measurable objectives without losing their broader implications. A second problem is to ensure that project goals specified in a project design or in broader program designs are appropriate to the context and consider available information in the local community.

2.2.2   Strategies for Formulating Project Goals

Project managers have to work with broad and general goals. All of the projects except that in Kenya were characterized by multiple and general goals and objectives. In the Zaire case, they changed over time from the fairly narrow goal of increasing food production, to the broader one of improving rural development, to the even broader one of building institutions. There are often good reasons for retaining such broad goals. Goals may be vague, such as "build local institutions," because it is unclear how to translate them into more specific objectives until the project is underway. Keeping them broad provides the project manager with maximum flexibility to reorient the project as new opportunities arise. Such flexibility seems particularly appropriate within the agriculture sector, where projects are often designed to effect behavioral changes and thus need to rely on local knowledge and experience. Second, it may be easier to gain support for broad, diffuse goals. The broader the goals, for example, the more potential beneficiaries there are and the harder it is for potential opponents to anticipate that they will be directly affected.

Although they provide flexibility, broad goals also pose problems. It is harder, for example, to define specific criteria for determining when personnel are successful. And it is more difficult to feel a sense of accomplishment and transmit it to

others. Although complex goals can overtax a weak management system, a focus on specific and short-term goals can divert attention from longer range purposes, such as building institutional or improving management capacity. Furthermore, most agricultural development projects involve a complex set of policies for which simple project goals may be inappropriate.

The cases describe some strategies for handling broad goals such as building local institutions. In the Zaire case, managers were able to maximize the flexibility in their broad goal of improving food production by adapting the goal as circumstances changed. Second, they adopted a longer time frame for achieving their goals. Third, the managers were able to break the goals down into sequential steps. The evaluators noted, however, that as they did this, the more short-term, concrete objectives tended to displace the long-term ones, and the more difficult, "messier" goals were easily deflected.

The Kenya case was the only project activity that began with and retained fairly concrete objectives. Project officers remained focused on the immediate goals of training staff and constructing buildings. They resisted donor efforts to reform the curriculum. For the Kenya case, the evaluators observed that "the simpler and clearer the project goals, the easier it is to reach consensus around them, to discipline activity around them, and to provide objective criteria for resource allocation." There was also positive support from the relevant ministries and from different stakeholders within the college; therefore, new goals did not have to be added to marshall support.

The Kenya case also illustrates the problem in defining goals too narrowly. The broader goal of the project was to assist technical training institutions, such as Egerton College, in improving human resources nationwide. It would have been possible for the involved Ministry to do a broad study of national employment patterns, predict the kind of training that would be most useful, and design the Egerton College project accordingly. Alternatively, the Ministry could have designed a project whereby Egerton College would undertake such a long-term study and evaluate its present program in light of that study. The project, however, was designed with much narrower objectives to expand the college and train faculty. In fact, the evaluators noted that employment patterns were shifting and that existing training methods and content might not be appropriate in the future. The focus on immediate objectives rather than the longterm goals may have been counterproductive. There is a dilemma here for project design. The Kenya project accomplished its objectives, partly because the objectives were narrowly defined. The objectives, however, were not necessarily the most appropriate ones, given longer range employment patterns and other development considerations.

Project managers situated at the local level may find it necessary to consult with local stakeholders, either to take advantage of local knowledge and resources or to gain local support. Such consultation will often make it necessary to adapt or refine the project. The Zaire case provides an example of such a willingness to change. Originally the project was designed to organize the farmers into cooperatives, but the farmers resisted. The project managers took this resistance seriously and modified the project. Instead of cooperatives, it planned demonstration fields. In this way, the farmers, who were very individualistic, were able to choose a technology on the basis of evidence and retain their sense of autonomy.

2.2.3 Summary of Strategies for Formulating Project Goals

The following strategies should be employed for formulating project goals:

-- Attend to the tradeoffs between simple and clear goals on the one hand, and more general and flexible goals on the other.

-- Adapt goals and objectives in response to new information or local conditions.

-- Use a longer time frame when management improvement is a goal.

2.3 Organizational and Institutional Structure

2.3.1 Problems

Project managers need to design organizational structures for delivering services or performing their activities. There are two kinds of structures that concern them. The first is assigning and delegating responsibility. The second is designing linkages with relevant ministries, regional bodies, and community organizations. A major problem is that managers with limited powers find it difficult and threatening to delegate power. Delegation often means a loss of control and increased need to collaborate rather than command. Working with other organizations can also be very time consuming and can even place development targets at risk.

2.3.2   Strategies for Delegating Responsibilities

A key issue in designing a development project is determining how much responsibility to devolve to those who are closest to the beneficiaries or groups outside the project organization. The Zaire project, managed by an expatriate contractor, broke responsibilities down into highly specialized positions. Authority for coordinating the specialists was then delegated to middle management operating at the community level. This strategy fit the purpose of the Zaire project very well, which was to increase the self-sufficiency of local communities in food production, a goal that required tailoring project assistance to local communities. This strategy was also relatively easy to carry out because the project, as a semiautonomous unit, had considerable freedom to decide on internal responsibilities and authority.

Alternatively, responsibility could be delegated directly to local organizations. This was the approach in Senegal, where the regional development agency administering the project worked with local farmer groups and installed local leaders as co-managers of local projects. In this role, community leaders are involved in planning, implementing, and evaluating efforts to increase pro-ductivity. They were assigned responsibility for monitoring credit repayment, levying fines, and overseeing irrigation. These are some of the trickiest aspects of implementing projects, and it proved very valuable to use indigenous leaders to make them work. This approach worked in this case because the farmer organizations were already strongly organized and were very conscious of maintaining their prerogatives. A similar effort to transfer responsibility to local farmer organizations did not work so well in Lesotho because farmers were not as well organized and their decision-making processes were unwieldy and time consuming.

The Niger case suggests that when responsibility is delegated to local units, the higher level organizations need to continue to be supportive rather than demanding. In this instance, community organizations needed a lot of logistical support and credit assistance to fulfill their share of the workload. Such support was not so critical in the Senegal project, however, where local organizations were stronger.

2.3.3   Strategies for Establishing Linkages With Other Levels of Government

Linkages are especially important when a project is dependent on the cooperation of Government agencies to provide needed supplies or services. The project in Niger, for example, chose to work through Government agencies rather than set up a parallel

structure, to ensure that the work would continue through these agencies after the project was completed. Linkages are also important when temporary organizations are set up to run a project, as was the case in Zaire. In such cases, it is important to build links with the agency to ensure that project benefits will continue after donor assistance terminates.

The Niger case offers a useful example of strategies for working with service agencies and the attendant constraints. Niger project managers tried many ways of including the services in various stages of the project. For example, they joined the service representatives with local farmer groups. They also used annual seminars to review performance and set goals for the next year. Despite the fact that none of these strategies has yet been successful, the evaluators suggest that the efforts should be continued for an additional period of time and that the services should be given a greater role in setting project goals.

The case suggests that coordination can place project goals at some risk as well as imposing considerable demands on project managers. For example, managers have to spend time with service personnel and use informal means to persuade them of the value of the project. Simultaneously, they have to be willing to relinquish some of their authority. There is also the risk that the services might divert some of the project resources to their own activities which they may feel are equally worthy. Thus, aggressive efforts to involve service representatives is risky for project authorities and donor institutions and could compromise larger development objectives.

Coordination may, however, have sufficient long-term payoffs for co-opting ministry officials to warrant the risks. The risks appear to vary according to the commitment of the service agencies to development goals, the extent of coordination among the different services, and whether their agencies support a colla- borative approach to problem solving. When none of these conditions is present--and few of them were in Niger--the risk of involving service personnel may be too great.

The Niger project's strategy for coordinating services was carried out by special offices in each locale. Project coordinators were hired for each area, and the project provided them with material support. For example, they constructed offices, provided technical support such as fuel and supplies, built warehouses, developed cooperatives, and provided training. A lesson is that project authorities may have to commit extensive resources and use a great deal of informal persuasion to convince fairly traditional service agencies to try innovative approaches to development.

The Zaire project pursued a different strategy. Unlike the Niger project, it was a semiautonomous unit. Its most critical managerial problem was getting supplies on time because of its remote location. Zaire established a logistical unit solely charged to deal with this supply problem. As in the Niger case, the project was particularly careful to allocate considerable resources to the logistics unit. Because of the remoteness of its site, the project provided resources for communication and travel to link the project with the rest of the country. The evaluators emphasized that the logistical unit was fully professional and a core activity of the project and that this was critical to the project's success.

2.3.4 Summary of Strategies for Establishing Linkages With Other Levels of Government

The following strategies should be employed for establishing linkages with other levels of government:

-- Set up a professional logistical unit when coordinating supplies.

-- Delegate responsibilities to managers in local organizations.

-- Provide logistical support and assistance to these organizations.

-- Give personnel from other agencies or organizations a voice in the plans and a stake in the outcome to win their cooperation.

-- Supplement structural innovations with resources and informal support.

2.4 Project-Level Management Procedures

Internal management procedures are another area of critical importance in implementing development projects. This paper will look briefly at three of the more important procedures discussed in the six cases: management information systems, personnel systems, and financial management systems.

2.4.1   Management Information Systems: Problems and Strategies

Managers need to collect, circulate, and analyze information to plan, monitor, and evaluate projects; to oversee personnel; and to manage their financial resources. Organizations involved in implementing projects in developing countries usually have at least some rudimentary systems for handling information. Such systems may fit the experience and knowledge of organization members, particularly at the local level, where field staff have limited experience and may be illiterate. Simple or virtually nonexistent systems may also be consistent with their cultural patterns. For example, in the Niger case, project authorities told villagers they had to keep records on loans. A not unusual response was, "But he's my brother; I'll remember what he took."

The primary lesson from the cases is that information systems should be as simple as possible for collecting the necessary information. One implication is that data collection by regional and national ministries will usually be different from the kinds of data needed by local field staff or village organizations. For example, in Niger, program agencies needed information on farmer preferences. Why, for example, did farmers prefer the oxdrawn cart? This information was necessary for the program agency to design a package of technical assistance. At the local level, however, the organizations in charge of credit simply needed records of who borrowed how much and when and if it was repaid. The system established at the local level in Niger was far too complicated for these needs.

Deciding how sophisticated data gathering and sampling frames should be requires delicate balancing. Usually, simple is better. It is possible, however, to err on the opposite side by underestimating the capacity of institutions to learn new skills. The project in Zaire, for example, set up an impressive system that collected data on maize production by month, merchant, commodity, railhead, price, and so forth. Ironically, AID was unwilling to fund the system, but the Zairian managers were committed to it and found local resources to finance it.

Although simple systems can often serve immediate needs, particularly at the local level, project innovations may increase the need for host organizations to design ways to handle information more effectively. For the six case projects, such changes meant that previously adequate information systems were unable to handle the increased demands. First, most of the projects were designed to get recipient organizations to embark on new activities, to consider additional factors and information, or to take a longer range perspective of their activities. Second, the projects were usually intended to get host organizations to look at the results of their activities and not merely monitor their activities. Third, most of the projects led to some sharing of

responsibilities among several organizations and made it necessary for them to share information. For all of these reasons, establishing an effective information system that was also appropriate to the needs and capacities of host institutions was a major factor in all of the projects.

The cases demonstrate that existing information systems were not suited for planning. One of the most important uses of a data system is to collect information for planning purposes. The experiences in the Senegal case demonstrate that their failure to collect data on the usage of supplies greatly inhibited their ability to anticipate, control, and plan their activities. According to the evaluators, "Such monitoring could have provided [the regional agency] with advance notice early in 1984 that its fertilizer supplier was running behind schedule, thus permitting [it] to take some sort of remedial action, e.g., lining up alternative sources of supply." Consider the Kenya case. When the decision was made to expand the training institute, there was no thought of collecting data on long-range employment needs, even though such information would have been very useful for establishing training priorities.

The Niger case illustrates one useful strategy for integrating data collection into planning needs that balances simplicity and the need for more information. The project unit designed a planning and control system as a sequence of steps, rather than trying to design all their information needs at one time. First, the project set up a planning system. Next, it set up a data system to monitor training and rates of farmer adoption of the technical package. In the future, data will be collected on yields and on the impact of the project on local organizations. This last step will be the most difficult because they will have to select indicators and find a cost-effective way to analyze the data for the impact of the technology at the village level.

The cases also suggest some common pitfalls to avoid. In the Senegal case, managers originally chose a single indicator--number of hectares opened--as a measure of agricultural productivity. It turned out not to be very useful. Ideally, they would have selected a variety of indicators, including yield and income per hectare, because it is usually difficult to anticipate exactly what kind of information is most valuable. The Zaire case illustrates the problems that arise when one organization classifies data differently than another organization with which it will share data. The result was that the two systems could not communicate. The lesson, therefore, is to consult with cooperating organizations about data categories and units.

2.4.2   Managing Human Resources: Problems and Strategies

There are three major components of an effective personnel system: (1) sufficient <u>incentives</u> to get organization members to carry out their roles effectively; (2) <u>monitoring</u> procedures that encourage staff rather than stifle them; and (3) <u>training and followup</u>, which will be addressed in Section 4 on interventions to improve management.

The cases illustrate that a lack of incentives for work is a persistent problem. For example, in Kenya, extension agents reportedly did not use research effectively because they receive very modest or even no rewards for doing good work. As the eval- uators observed in the Senegal case, organizations are much more apt to emphasize penalties than rewards. The Niger case illustrates that the lack of rewards for good work affects more than individual performance. The evaluators suggest that the reason members are reluctant to spend time on teamwork and consultation is not because of their attitudes, but because there are few if any rewards for engaging in team work or spending time communicating with others.

One incentive is to provide adequate salaries based on per- formance. Monetary resources for providing rewards, however, are usually very scarce. A major problem in Senegal has been the lack of incentives to retain the services of those with responsibility for overseeing water pumping. They rarely get any salary; usually their pay is in the form of extra water or preparation of their farm plots. Although these alternatives reflect the management team's resourcefulness, the amounts have not been sufficient, and there remains a high turnover among the pump operators. Incentives can also be provided through travel funds or vehicles for extension agents to make their visits. Several of the cases reported that field visits were not made because transportation was unavailable. Not only did this make it impossible for the project to succeed, but it did not even provide extension agents with an incentive to try. In Liberia, the project provided motorbikes, which proved to be a wise use of resources.

The cases suggest that incentives can take many forms. The evaluators in the Liberia case noted that "clearly defined work assignments that challenge an individual's skills or tap that person's intellectual interests can serve as incentives, at least temporarily, when promotion opportunities and other financial rewards are lacking." In the Senegal case, the observers noted that clear work assignments were valuable because they enabled the staff to understand how their tasks fit into the overall work of the organization. "Many middle and lower level management employees do not really understand how their work fits into and contributes to the organization. Knowing how one's work contributes is a basic element in employee motivation."

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Incentives and monitoring are closely related. If managers are going to provide rewards as incentives, they need a system for reviewing and measuring performance. The immediate problem, however, is deciding what aspect of performance to measure--the effort of staff or the results of their work. Measuring effort is clearly easier, which tempts managers to rely on routinized monitoring procedures that tell them what a member does, but not how well the job is done or what the results are. Such a relatively simple system also fits the data-gathering capacities of many local units. For example, one could check on the activity levels of staff by noting the number of times they requested a staff vehicle or the rate at which they used key supplies. This is the logic behind the system used in the Niger case, where managers exercised control by requiring staff to make formal requests for field trucks or other vehicles. This approach to monitoring, however, can mean that a lot of time is spent collecting information about details that may or may not be related to the actual performance of the agents. The value of the approach is that the data are easily collected and easily understood by the agents.

The alternative approach is to design a monitoring system around the results of staff activity rather than the level of effort. Superficially, this approach seems preferable because it encourages staff to focus on results, and hence is more useful to managers. The Senegal project tried both approaches and found that measures of effort may be a fairer indicator of job performance than are measures of impact. They measured the performance of contract staff with several indicators of effort--the quality of work, the quantity and rapidity of work, responsibility, and interpersonal relations. The regular staff were evaluated not on effort but on whether their work led to improvements in production. Although the second system based on impact measures seems more relevant to management concerns, project managers found that in fact it forced them to rely on looser criteria and it was a much harder system to implement.

A final lesson about monitoring that emerges from the cases is the need to be sensitive to the image of a monitoring unit. Monitoring and evaluation are often seen as negative, faultfinding activities, and units in charge of them are typically resented. This was true in Zaire, where the monitoring unit tried various ways to deal with its image. First it changed its title to "Communications Unit," and then later to "Data Collection and Analysis Unit." The lesson is not to adopt euphemisms, but to handle monitoring responsibilities with sensitivity and to see that positive data are collected and used to reward people as well as to hold them accountable.

2.4.3   Financial Management: Problems and Strategies

As with information and personnel systems, there are tradeoffs in designing an appropriate financial management system. The ideal is to have a budget to help plan programs and to group expenditures and other financial transactions by program categories and to have a system that records expenditures and monitors cash flows. Such a system would help managers use financial information to plan and track programs. Budgets enable managers to compare what was spent with what was budgeted and provide the basis for analysis of spent and unspent funds. Budgets can be used as a simple tool for monitoring activities. A problem is that many budgetary systems proposed for agricultural development projects, particularly those based on detailed program categories, often exceed the need and capacity of development projects and become exercises in unnecessary sophistication.

The financial management systems in all six cases were fairly rudimentary. They monitored cash flows, but almost all failed to provide the kinds of information that managers could use to plan and coordinate activities or to monitor staff performance. At their best, simple financial management systems use accounting procedures to monitor cash flow but do not group expenditures by program categories. At other times, simplicity can be a euphemism for a system that maintains very poor records, where notations are kept by memory or written on scraps of paper. Local units in Niger, and even the Egerton College case in Kenya, illustrate these latter problems.

The cases suggest two useful strategies for improving financial management systems. First, decide what tasks the system needs to accomplish; second, keep the system as simple as possible consistent with these tasks. Senegal provides an example of a system that was intentionally designed around information needs. Managers found that their major problems involved monitoring cash flow. On the one hand, the Government was late providing resources and, at the same time, farmers were late repaying loans, with the result that credit funds were squeezed from both ends. The managers designed a financial management system around their needs for tracking cash flows and repayment records. The Kenya and Senegal cases both indicate that fairly simple financial management systems can often accomplish what needs to be done. Simplicity is especially critical in those cases in which managers are trying to transfer responsibilities to local organizations or field staff. In such cases it is critical to keep the system within the capability of the staff who will be learning and using the new system. (Whereas AID believed that the Senegalese system was very inadequate, and even considered halting funding for a time, the Government reported that the project met its financial management requirements and that these were adequate.)

Tracking or cash flow systems proved useful in helping projects address a persistent problem facing most of them--monitoring the use of supplies. Because agricultural development projects involve coordinating a variety of resources, making certain they arrive at the right time, and distributing them when needed, a financial management system that can facilitate these tasks is very valuable.

The Niger case also documents the value of a financial management system that is fairly simple and further suggests that it may be counterproductive to require overly sophisticated tracking of expenses and supply use. After AID officials urged several improvements in its system, the evaluators observed that managers began to concentrate on "the letter of the law" and the tracking of material supplies and ignored broader and more substantive project goals. One implication might be that a simpler system would have left project managers free to concentrate on substantive issues. Whereas there is no evidence to support this implication, the case does suggest that more elaborate financial management systems do not guarantee that managers will use the system for broad program decisions.

The Kenya case illustrates the tradeoffs between a relatively simple system and a more elaborate budgetary approach. Its financial management system monitored overall cash flows rather than spending by budgetary categories. In addition to this limitation, it performed poorly in those areas in which it was supposed to operate. Reports were routinely late and often unavailable. The evaluators noted that these problems were not debilitating because the leadership was strongly committed to the project and kept it on track. The Kenya project was also autonomous and did not have to coordinate its finances with other national-level organizations. The dilemma is that although the system was adequate for present purposes, it did not prepare the college to address its long-term expansion needs, based on improvements brought about by the project. The project was successful in expanding the capacity of the college; however, it did not give the managers the capability of computing the costs of maintaining the additional activities. For this reason, the evaluators felt that in time, the simplicity of the financial tracking system would become a serious handicap. What was needed was a system for tracking expenses and also anticipating future costs. Thus, the change produced by the project made it far more critical to have a financial management system that could be used for planning purposes.

The cases provide several lessons for managers who believe that a financial management system is an essential part of overall project management. First, managers should consider investing in expertise. The project staff in Zaire, for example, believed they needed a financial manager and were willing to pay a high salary to get one who was well trained. Second, it is not

enough to simply implant a new system. Managers must sell the merits of the system and demonstrate the positive value of the information it will provide. Such a strategy is important when a project is trying to involve local community groups in the accounting and budget processes. They are often suspicious of systems that cause them to change their routines. They may even fear that they will lose some influence if the system is too complex for them to understand easily. The managers in the Niger case saw the need for collecting better financial information but appreciated the sensitivity of local leaders. Therefore, although they insisted that personnel collect better information on the uses of funds, they also spent time persuading local leaders about its merits and gave them more time to make the changes.

2.4.4   Summary of Sample Strategies Used in Designing Project Management Systems

The following strategies should be employed in designing project management systems:

-- Design information systems that are appropriate and simple.

-- Provide rewards based on performance. Rewards and incentives include salaries, job clarity, and supplies.

-- Consider whether to measure effort or results.

-- Keep financial management as simple as possible.

-- Develop simple ways to record cash flow and supplies.

2.5 Relations Between Project Units and Their Environments

2.5.1   Problems

The context within which managers function provides both constraints and opportunities. As an example of constraints, the farmers in the Zaire project resisted efforts to organize them into cooperatives. In Senegal, however, well-organized farmers' organizations provided an opportunity for the project unit to deal with the farmers fairly efficiently. While in both cases there was local resistance and delay to the introduction of new systems, project managers responded creatively to overcome this resistance.

Managers need to be attentive to the environment for at least two reasons. First, they need to consider local norms and cultural values. Local norms influence how local organizations relate to one another and the kinds of pressures and supports that affect the success of the project. For example, in Senegal the farmers believed that public organizations should provide them with free services. Second, project managers need the support, at least tacit, of beneficiary populations and organizations in high places and in the local community; therefore, they need to consider local views. The latter is especially important when the project is attempting to change local behavior. Powerful interests at any level can derail projects, particularly when proposed changes threaten their positions. Problems can also arise when project policy is not supported by existing policy, as was the case with the Lesotho project's attempt to restrict grazing rights.

Managers may fail to consider local norms and expectations if they are isolated from local views. In the Senegal case, for example, Government agencies ignored local views for a long time. On the other hand, governments may only respond if local groups organize and present their views vocally, as in Senegal, or if it is clear that the present policy is failing, as in Niger. Alternatively, the local community may not support a project because residents are unaware of their options or fail to see how the project will be useful to them, as was generally the case in Niger. In such cases, the burden falls on the project to mobilize and persuade the community. As the Niger case illustrates, managers cannot rely solely on social pressure and control to get farmers involved unless the community is homogeneous. The six cases provide examples of strategies used by projects to be more attentive and responsive to community interests and needs, and strategies for enlisting their support for project goals.

2.5.2   Strategies for Relating Projects to Their Environments

Initiate Dialogues. In the Senegal case, project staff visited farmers to convince them of the value of the project and to sensitize them to the issues and possibilities. Such visits can obviously be conducted in a very peremptory, top-down fashion, or they can be conducted as a dialogue. The Senegal case does not indicate the tenor of the visits but because the farmers were already highly organized and aware of their needs, some dialogue probably occurred. The case does confirm that the more managers try to stimulate dialogue and conduct open-ended sessions, the more important it is to provide training to the staff conducting the meetings or doing the visiting.

The strategies attempted in the Zaire project confirm that dialogue is by far the most effective way to engage farmers in project activities. "Although somewhat suspicious of the extensionists at first, villagers warmed to the cooperative, per-suasive attitudes of agents as opposed to the coercive tactics of former governmental and private sector extension agents, who forced farmers to grow certain crops." Conversely, in the same project, farmer groups were unsuccessful in getting individual farmers to participate in project plans to increase maize production. The reason, according to the evaluators, was that "the groups were not really used as the means of a dialogue with the farmers as proposed in the original" design.

Name Local Leaders to Planning Boards or Field-Level Posi-tions. The purpose in this strategy is to ensure that local views are considered by bringing local representatives onto decision-making and implementing bodies. The Lesotho project set up an overlapping authority that included both Government personnel and the local chiefs. The project retained final authority and thus assumed responsibility for making unpopular decisions. This strategy is particularly useful when project goals threaten the power of local elites, in this case the local tribal chiefs. Traditional leaders (the chiefs) were included in the project decision-making mechanism, as were local elected leaders. However, the latter could disavow responsibility for decisions that hurt the chiefs because the project authority retained veto power. In Zaire, local people were gradually given a majority of field-level positions. According to the evaluators they "spread the word about the project, and were able to communicate effectively its many objectives to their family and friends."

Develop Personal Relationships With Local Leadership. In Lesotho, the project staff made a special effort to develop good relations with not only the local chiefs, but also those in the judiciary who had influence in land-ownership disputes. In Zaire, project personnel got involved in local community affairs by assisting the local hospital, thus earning the respect of leaders in the community.

Provide Immediate and Tangible Benefits. The logic of this strategy is that success breeds success. The strategy was par-ticularly effective in Zaire. Originally the project was not accorded much local legitimacy, but managers accelerated work to offer visible and desirable benefits to local beneficiaries. These included low-cost adapted seed, improved roads, and small tools; these benefits enhanced the legitimacy of the project.

Broaden or Change the Goals or Design of a Project. Sometimes it is possible to broaden a project to gain the support of more groups. This occurred in Zaire. The original design of the project, which was to build cooperatives, offended the individualism of the farmers. "The farmers were too individualistic and distrustful of even other families in their own village to be ready for cooperative endeavors." Project managers responded by adjusting the project. Instead of trying to organize farmers into cooperatives, managers provided demonstration plots, allowing farmers to observe and select those innovations they preferred.

Provide Training and Support for Local Groups and Individuals. The Niger project selected farmer couples in each community for intensive training, on the assumption that they would use the new technology and educate others after returning to their villages. They also targeted the training to those who were most interested. This strategy worked to some extent. However, the evaluators suggested the training would have more impact if it were offered to a larger number or a critical mass in each village instead of to a few farmer couples. The project staff in Senegal have been successful in gradually transferring responsibilities to local groups. They are "working closely with [local] officers to establish formal structures to enable farmers to participate in overall management of irrigation in the area, moving towards fully autonomous and self-sustaining management."

Encourage Entrepreneurship. Managers need to encourage beneficiaries to look for resources and to make the most of limited opportunities. One way to stimulate entrepreneurship is to avoid applying rules more rigidly than is necessary. This is a difficult strategy to describe because it has to vary with the situation. Examples from the cases include the Lesotho manager who contacted judicial leaders to gain their support, the Zaire staff that got involved in the community, and the Niger staff that explored ways to involve the Government services in working with farmer organizations. In each of these projects, managers were seeking ways to maximize their limited resources and to energize others.

2.5.3   Summary of Sample Strategies To Relate Projects to Their Environments

The following strategies should be employed to relate projects to their environments:

--   Initiate dialogues between beneficiaries and project staff.

--   Name local leaders to planning boards or field-level decision-making positions.

--   Develop personal relationships with local leadership.

--   Provide immediate and tangible benefits.

--   Broaden the goals or design of a project.

--   Provide training and support for local groups and individuals.

--   Encourage entrepreneurship.

3.   <u>MANAGING DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS</u>

3.1 <u>Changing Roles of Program Agencies</u>

The six projects, which provide the basic data for this study, were preselected in the agriculture and rural development sector and, therefore, concern strategies used by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development in each country. The Liberia project involved the Ministry of Agriculture directly; it was designed to improve the data-handling capacity of the Planning Department within the Ministry. The other five projects were related more indirectly. For example, the Niger project was administered at the department level by a regional body within the Ministry. It was designed to coordinate the technical services of several central program agencies located in a specific geographic region. Insofar as the projects were related to a program agency, some of the strategies that they attempted had direct implications for managing programs.

The projects are relevant to program agencies in a second respect. To the extent that regional or local bodies are encouraged to embark on developmental activities, they will place new demands on program agencies in the future, and the latter will need to rethink their role. Even now there are pressures for them to become more involved in providing services to local areas rather than directly sponsoring efforts to increase production. Instead of administering discrete projects they will need to look at the agriculture sector as a whole. Rather than dealing with national-level programs such as forestry, they will have to find ways to stimulate improved farming at the local level.

In general, program agencies are neither oriented nor structured to meet these new demands. Typically, they have fairly formal and hierarchical structures, and are ill-suited to decentralizing power throughout the regions of a country or tailoring programs to suit local needs. As a result, program agencies generally find it easier to focus on national-level programs such as forestry management than on programs to stimulate broad community change. This section will examine some of the strategies illustrated by the cases that directly relate to the management of program agencies.

3.2 Program Leadership: Problems and Strategies

The Liberia case illustrates the importance of leadership within program agencies. The purpose of the project was to improve sector planning within the Ministry of Agriculture by improving its ability to collect and analyze data and to set up an integrated planning model for the whole sector. Because these goals involved considerable change in how the Ministry operated, they involved changes in attitudes as well as learning skills. Initially, the project was very successful and the evaluators attribute the success to the strong support offered by the Minister. Because of his strong leadership, he was able to counter the prevailing organizational culture in the Ministry and encourage staff to take planning seriously. After he was replaced, the project became isolated and the Ministry no longer supported it.

3.3 Program Planning

3.3.1 Problems

Many of the changes occurring within national-level ministries involve program goals and designs. For example, the evaluators of the Niger case note that the Ministry of Rural Development is "in the midst of a transition from a national rural development policy that promoted large regional rural development projects to one that emphasizes smaller scale, village-level interventions." A problem is that existing programs do not always reflect these changes, and the Ministry is not set up to design appropriate programs for these newly emerging roles. Bureaucracies, even in the Western world, normally take the line of least resistance. They are unlikely to consider changing their traditional technologies unless there is some specific feedback that the bureaucracy is not working.

3.3.2   Program Planning Strategies

The major strategy for improving program planning is to institute some means of getting feedback from end users. For example, the Agriculture Department in Niger had been promoting a dubious technology package to farmers but one which they were reluctant to change. Only recently has the Department been getting feedback encouraging it to experiment with alternatives. Without more feedback, the Department may not continue to experiment with alternative packages because it is always more difficult to manage experimentation and research than a single package applied across the board. One lesson for program planning is to increase the capacity of a ministry to engage in sectoral planning, as the Liberia project attempted. A second lesson is to ensure that there is feedback from local levels to national planning bodies or that planning is decentralized so that it can be more flexible and responsive. The Niger project was set up to encourage precisely these kinds of changes in the service agencies, but, unfortunately, it encountered much resistance.

The Liberia project provides another lesson for improving the program planning capacity of agencies. It is one thing to set up a good system. The more critical issue, however, is to be sure that data collection and analysis are integrated into the management and planning process--that the data are used in making plans and decisions and in monitoring implementation. For example, the data collection system in Zaire was good, but it was too complex for the abilities of staff. This is at least one reason why it was not used in management decision-making. The Niger project used the strategy of annual workplans to integrate data feedback into planning and other management actions, but managers had mixed results with this approach.

3.4 Organizational Issues in Program Design

3.4.1   Problems

The major organizational issues confronting program agencies is to determine whether and how they should decentralize their activities to regional and local arms of the national ministries or to alternative units. Typically, ministries are hierarchical and centralized and are poorly equipped to adapt decisions to local regions and communities. As a result, their technology tends not to be innovative or appropriate. Such top-down structures tend to be inflexible and often do not have the confidence of those whose behavior they want to change.

Decentralization always requires some coordination by the program agency among the different units. Coordination is necessary for planning and monitoring supplies, ensuring that resources get where they are needed, adjusting program priorities in light of new experiences, and so forth. The cases illustrate why coordination is difficult, even when different units share the same goals. For example, both the Niger and Zaire projects had trouble getting supplies from Government agencies. Even though the agencies shared the goals of the project, they had their own priorities related to their ongoing service responsibilities. In such cases, it is hard to induce other organizations to cooperate because it would only mean extra work. Moreover, personnel find that any benefits they do receive come through their regular service agency; it is therefore natural for them to remain loyal to their home organization.

3.4.2   Decentralization Strategies

One strategy is to decentralize some discretionary authority to regional or district levels of a ministry. The assumption is that they will be more flexible and responsive to local communities and can influence reorientation of the national ministries. The Senegal case illustrates that district offices of a ministry can be responsive when two conditions exist. First, the ministry supports such reorientation around local needs; second, local communities are organized to press their interests. In Senegal, the Regional Development Authority had been very bureaucratic and authoritarian but in time changed its style to share decisionmaking with local farmer organizations. The reorientation apparently was in response to demands that local farmer organizations brought to Ministry officials. The higher level officials supported the farmers vis-a-vis the regional agency.

The cases also provide evidence that decentralization needs to be carefully designed. For example the Niger case illustrates that it is more appropriate to decentralize some tasks than others. Many of the tasks often delegated to local organizations, such as managing credit or cereal banks, are not always economically feasible, given the lack of purchasing power in local communities. The same case also illustrates that when an agency transfers responsibility for such tasks as credit management, it needs to provide support, such as training and followup visits. In Zaire, where local field staff were given considerable authority over the project, it was clear that more time should have been spent on clarifying objectives and the roles of different individuals and subsystems than was done in this case. The authority granted to local staff also needs to be consistent with their capacity. For example, in Niger, an effort was made to experiment with different technology packages. This was not carried out, however, because local field staff were not set up

to monitor different techniques. Insofar as the purpose of the decentralization was to enhance the role of field staff, the evaluators believed it would have been more appropriate to have retained a single technology and to have applied it in all villages.

Instead of working through its regional, district, or subdistrict offices, a ministry can choose to delegate project authority to autonomous units, as in Kenya where the school officials operated outside of the Ministry's jurisdiction, or to a semiautonomous unit, as was tried in the Range Management unit in Lesotho. Autonomy is most appropriate when local field offices are weak and would likely divert resources to their own activities. It worked well in the Kenya case and gave the Director a lot of flexibility. Autonomy can pose limitations, however, as illustrated by the same case. The Kenya project involved a particular college, which was relatively autonomous from related Ministries, such as Civil Service, Education, and Agriculture. Whereas this autonomy gave great freedom to the Director, which he used effectively, it meant that decisions about college enrollment were made in isolation from longer term changes in employment and training needs in the country. Autonomy is also not particularly effective when the implementing unit is unable to commandeer necessary resources, as was the case in Niger. In such cases, a closer relationship with the Ministry would have made it easier to procure supplies.

3.4.3   Coordination Strategies

Coordination can take several forms and does not always have to involve central control. Coordination can occur in several ways: market arrangements in which organizations exchange benefits; coercion by one organization over another; an established hierarchy, where one agency has authority over another; or finally, the sharing of common goals. To induce the support and cooperation of other organizations, an implementing organization needs to have something to exchange, be in a position to coerce others, be linked to others in a hierarchical relationship, or be able to convince them they share goals.

Several means of coordination are illustrated by the cases; for example, joint committees of agency personnel and farmers were used successfully in Senegal. The reason seemed to be that the agency needed the local groups to implement its policies, and thus they were able to exchange benefits. Also, the project goals were fairly broad, which made it easier for all the groups to share in the goals and be willing to work together. Ad hoc committees were used in Liberia but were not successful, apparently because they had no authority to implement their recommendations. The Niger and Zaire cases suggest that shared

goals are not sufficient to coordinate activities among different levels. In both cases, the evaluators commented that the projects were at a serious disadvantage in getting supplies on time because they had no authority over the agencies they depended on. Thus, coordinating bodies will not be able to serve their purposes unless they have some authority over the issues facing them.

3.4.4 Summary of Strategies for Decentralizing and Coordinating Programs

Program managers should consider some of the following strategies for decentralizing and coordinating programs:

-- Delegate responsibility to regional and local levels of the program agency.

-- Decentralize authority to local field staff.

-- Set up an autonomous unit to manage a project.

-- Ensure that coordinating bodies have some control over resources in implementing project goals.

-- Be certain that delegated tasks are within the capacity of local units or appropriate for them.

-- When delegating responsibility, provide backup support.

-- Establish broad and multiple goals to facilitate coordination.

3.5 Internal Management Procedures in Program Agencies

3.5.1 Problems

A major challenge for program agencies is to develop procedures to effectively service other organizations. For example, in the Liberia case the Ministry needed to be able to do sector planning and to work closely with regional and local units in designing and implementing the plans. This new role required the Ministry to reorganize itself and establish new management procedures, a change that has proved difficult and slow to bring about.

It is one thing to add new tasks to an organization. It is quite another to acknowledge that these will place new demands on the organization and require new procedures for carrying them out. For example, in the Liberian Planning Department there was no specificity about who would do what. A lot of job overlapping and competition existed. The project increased the Department's capacity to handle data and to take advantage of it. However, the Department needed new procedures to coordinate data processing with the work of other units. For example they needed to be able to work closely with the department that handled supplies so they could integrate the data they collected with data on supplies. The problem in introducing this kind of coordination is that each special task force within an organization is protective of its autonomy and reluctant to share information or spend the time that coordination takes.

3.5.2   <u>Strategies Involving Management Procedures in Program Agencies</u>

To deal with these pressures, the Agriculture Ministry in Liberia established "divisions that correspond more closely to its key functions such as extension and planning. Ideally such a structure would allow more clearly defined responsibilities among divisions, coordinating their activities and directing resources more effectively to critical problems." The changes are very recent and the results are not yet known.

The review of project-level issues in Section 2 noted that the timely procurement of supplies was a critical weakness in many of the projects. It proposed that the most appropriate management strategy at the project level is to set up a data system to anticipate needs and to track the receipt and use of supplies. Some of the problems that project units face can be ameliorated if the program agency, at national and regional levels, can become more effective in collecting information from local units and ensuring that supplies are available when needed. Several strategies were adopted to increase the capacity of program agencies, but basically they all relied on a planning and control system that decentralized some of the planning functions while retaining control over others.

In Senegal, planning was gradually decentralized, but the program agency continued to be responsible for monitoring. Their technique was to use joint committees of agency personnel and farmer leaders to elicit local grievances, while retaining control over final plans. The Liberia project also attempted to decentralize data collection and planning to get better information and to reduce strains on overextended central agencies. Seminars and a senior management workshop have been held, but the system is proving difficult to implement because of limited com-

mitment by senior staff. The Liberian Ministry has also had the problem of decentralization of planning producing variations in local projects, which in turn makes it harder for the central authorities to supervise what is happening. Their improved data collection system should enable them to address this problem, but only if the data are channeled to those with authority to make decisions.

Several of the projects have experimented with computerized monitoring systems and quarterly reports to keep all units informed. In the Niger case, a computerized system was set up to monitor credit. Reportedly, it led the project to reorder some of its priorities. The evaluators observed that it needs to be accompanied by a strong training program if it is to work well. Quarterly reports were tried in Niger, without too much success. The evaluators reasoned that "there was little felt need on any-body's part for these, probably on the grounds that they contain very little information that is not already known." The lesson is to adopt strategies that fit with data needs and staff perceptions of these needs. A third coordinating strategy was tried in Senegal, where the agency standardized recruitment policies among decentralized units. This practice made it easier for the regional agency to coordinate work in the many project units and to provide personnel assistance.

3.5.3 Summary of Strategies Involving Management Procedures

The following management procedures should be considered:

-- Design ministry offices to provide services to local units.

-- Adopt a planning and control system that decentralizes some of the planning functions but retains some control.

-- Experiment with computerized monitoring and regular reports.

-- Approach planning as a sequence of steps.

-- Channel data directly to those with authority to use them in planning decisions.

3.6 Relationship Between Programs and Their Environments

The decentralization strategies described in Section 3.4.2 adapted programs to local contexts. Another innovation to keep the program agency in touch with its environment was tried in

Lesotho. It designated an adviser within the Ministry to track local issues and policy problems and interpret what is going on in the environment. He reviews policies, consults with community members, passes on comments to others in the Ministry, and provides an important link with the local setting.

4. PROJECT INTERVENTIONS TO ENHANCE MANAGEMENT CAPACITY

4.1 Projects as Management Interventions

This section draws from the same set of cases to examine the variety of interventions capable of enhancing, increasing, or improving the capacity of managers and institutions to carry out the management and coping strategies described above. Discussions of interventions frequently distinguish among at least training, technical assistance, and financial transfers. Other enhancement interventions have also been isolated. The six cases illustrate ways in which the first three types of interventions improved management. This section will explore how training, technical assistance, and financial transfers were used in these projects to enhance leadership and to improve the ability of host managers to design development activities, design organizations capable of sustaining project benefits over time, improve management procedures, and improve the ability of managers to adapt to their environments.

It is important to underscore that using interventions to enhance management is considerably different from using them to accomplish project outcomes such as increased yields. When part of the goal is to improve management, those in charge of the interventions need to spend more time working with host officials, increasing their management skills and their organizational capacity. The gamble is that although this process may dilute some project outcomes and take longer, it will ultimately lead to more sustained development.

4.2 Interventions To Enhance Leadership

The single variable most critical to explaining success in the six cases was local leadership. This factor has important implications for interventions. How can leadership encourage, model, and support creative leaders? At the very least, those who design and fund interventions need to review their policies and models to ensure that they do not make it difficult for effective leaders to work within their systems.

Project designs can look for role models for creative leadership. For example, they can build on local models such as village headmen who have used extensive interpersonal connections. There may, of course, be negative results from using local models. Personal connections are often perceived solely as an opening for corruption rather than as a chance for exerting leadership.[5] One reason is that assistance is often based on management models borrowed from the Western context, which emphasize efficiency rather than informal relationships. Implicitly, Western models often discredit some of the very kinds of local leadership that proved most effective in these cases. In reality, these cases provide several examples where donors supported effective leaders and provided models of good leadership themselves. In general they saw the projects as an opportunity to give local people leverage and visibility and encourage them to use these assets to effect change in the service agencies and local communities.

One intervention strategy is for project personnel to model effective leadership while offering technical assistance. The cases illustrate that modeling of leadership and effective management styles can be done by expatriates either working within the host institutions or while remaining independent. Both systems appear to work if those giving assistance are sensitive to the views of host personnel and flexible in working with them. In the Senegal case, expatriates were integrated into host country institutions and worked under their counterparts. Although this arrangement apparently caused some tension, the expatriates adapted and were able to demonstrate effective leadership styles while working under the direction of host authorities. The arrangement made it easier for host officials to follow their examples.

In the Lesotho project, expatriate staff remained more inde-pendent and actually assumed certain jobs within the Ministry while Lesotho personnel were being trained. After the trainees returned, the expatriates became advisers and worked with the newly trained officials as counterparts. Ministry officials reported learning such subtle approaches as how to use influence creatively, how to explore alternative solutions to a problem, and how to use both formal and informal channels. These are aspects of management that would be hard to teach in training sessions or to offer in a technical assistance package. One

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[5]D.K. Leonard, "The Political Realities of African Management," in Report off a Preparatory Evaluation Workshop on the Management of Development Project in Africa, AID Evaluation Special Study No. 33, (Washington, D.C.: AID, January 1986).

reason the strategy worked in the Lesotho case was that project staff offering technical assistance were housed very close to their counterparts, encouraging close relations and much interaction. The Kenya case provides negative evidence that proximity is important if project staff are going to be influential in demonstrating effective management. In Kenya, those expatriates who taught regular courses while host teachers were receiving training remained socially and physically isolated from the other college staff. Not only did they miss opportunities to have more influence, they generated a fair amount of resentment.

In the Senegal case, an expatriate member of the project staff modeled effective ways to work with local farmers. His work illustrates that management can be effectively demonstrated by those providing technical assistance in the field as well as by project managers. While demonstrating the uses of fertilizer, he was very creative in making contacts with the community. He visited the villages in the evenings, showed films about farms, which were interspersed with comedy films, organized 4-H type clubs, and distributed a newsletter with extension tips. His efforts were effective and served as a model of how project personnel can relate to villagers.

The Zaire case illustrates the importance of involving host officials in project design from the outset. In this case, an expatriate contractor managed the project, an arrangement which was both convenient for USAID and acceptable to host officials. It was not until midway through the project that senior host officials were detailed to the project by the Government of Zaire, considerably limiting the amount of training and management experience they gained from the project.

Another obvious way in which interventions can enhance leadership is to design training that covers both management and leadership. Several of the cases offered management training as part of their intervention strategy. The Lesotho case provides interesting evidence, because a number of those involved had received training from AID in prior years. Most of those who had been given training had progressed to management positions. The management training they had received had proved particularly useful. Descriptions by former trainees of the kind of training needed went considerably beyond training in technical skills and addressed such factors as management style and leadership. The trainees believed "that management training would introduce participants to a more assertive management style, one that inculcated the habit of exploring alternative avenues for solving problems. Such training might help a future manager learn how to take the initiative, plan ahead, and have confidence in his decisions."

The Senegal project also included training in management and offered it to both regional and local staff. The project rein-

forced the training by using trainees at higher levels to train those at lower levels. Regional staff were trained at Ministry centers; they then trained village leaders who would be assuming management positions; and they in turn trained leaders of local farmer groups. Although the training at the lowest level was mostly technical, the training at the other two levels included managerial training.

In summary, lessons for ways that project interventions can enhance leadership include (1) modeling good leadership while providing technical assistance and (2) designing training to address both management and leadership factors.

4.3 Interventions To Improve the Capacity of Host Institutions To Design Development Activities

The cases provide lessons on how interventions can be used to enhance host country capacity for project design. One lesson is that interventions need to pay more attention to the management implications of project designs. Evaluators in the Kenya and Liberia cases both noted that management issues were not considered in the original project design. In Liberia, a new data system was set up without considering whether the management requirements were within the capacity of the Ministry.

This same case, however, adds an interesting qualifier to this lesson. The Ministry did not have the management capacity to apply the increased capacity for handling data, but the fact that they can now collect and analyze larger amounts of data is stimulating officials to rethink how they manage the planning process. Thus, preliminary management analyses can be useful. At other times technical assistance can serve as a stimulus to get an organization to deal with management issues.

The lesson is clear, nonetheless, that it would be useful to include an analysis of the existing management capacity in an organization before completing a project design. One of the major lessons from the vast literature on project implementation is that designers should gauge which agency or organization is best able to perform a given activity and assign responsibility accordingly. The point is that policy design and availability of resources are not sufficient guarantees of implementation and that some organizations are better equipped than others, and potentially more committed than others, to conduct a project. The emphasis should be on studying management strengths and weaknesses rather than on making a judgment about the merits of the present management. The purpose of such an assessment would be to tailor the design to the strengths of the organization and supplement it where needed. In this regard, recall the Kenya case, in which a management assessment was done, but one which the evaluators believed was both perfunctory and mistaken.

A second lesson is that projects designed to improve management capacity need to consider a longer time frame than the normal project life of 5-10 years. As the evaluators of the Kenyan case note, in a short-term project that "depends on such management enhancement for its success, one of two outcomes is likely--either the project will not achieve its goals or it will be managed by expatriates." In other words, if the short time frame is critical, such as in a food production project, then it is probably better to operate the project within the existing management system than to attempt to change the system. Conversely, if improving management is critical and the project is concerned with developing and sustaining an overall institution, then a longer time frame is necessary.

A third lesson is that designers should be flexible enough to permit some adaptation by host officials and project units. Donors often debate whether interventions should be carefully planned or whether they should be left fairly open-ended. The evaluations provide some tentative lessons. The evaluators of the Kenya project believed that preliminary designs are useful if they are tailored to the tasks of a project. They distinguished among three kinds of project tasks, each requiring different management approaches: (1) a physical production process, such as managing a demonstration farm, in which the task is to ensure that supplies are available on time, that bottlenecks are corrected, and that the process is kept on track; (2) a financial management system that requires centralized data collection and record keeping to maintain control and accountability; and (3) a system with many parallel processes, such as a program to stimulate production in local communities. The point of this classification is that in the first two cases a fairly centralized, controlling management system is appropriate, whereas in the third case, a more decentralized and adaptive system is desirable. In this latter case, managers need to delegate decisions to middle- and lower-level staff who can make independent decisions relevant to their local situations.

Whereas the above approach suggests that designers should anticipate management needs and design a system accordingly, another approach says that interventions should be more openended and encourage host managers to respond to the local situation. The projects in Senegal and Zaire illustrate instances in which original designs were altered as the project managers gained new information and interacted with the community. In these cases, the interventions were designed to be flexible and gave the managers an opportunity to adapt and learn from their experiences.

Another way to include flexibility is for the intervention to establish demonstration activities. For example, instead of promoting a particular approach, assistance can be designed to offer a series of prototypes and let local personnel choose among

them. Prototype grazing units, for example, were used in Lesotho; in Zaire, demonstration fields worked far better than direct organizing efforts; in Senegal, demonstrations by an expatriate technician proved very effective. In all of these cases, the role of the project intervention was to present options and allow local groups to select among them.

A fourth way that interventions can assist in project design is to use the interventions as an opportunity to raise policy issues with host governments. Policies related to a given intervention can be a major factor in how successful it is. For example, a project to improve the production of a certain crop might have been very successful if the government's pricing policies had not kept prices so low that farmers were discouraged from planting the crop. The project may provide an opportunity to talk with host officials about policy alternatives. When projects establish good data monitoring systems documenting the impact of the policy, dialogues can be even more effective. Although policy dialogues can be conducted with national-level officials over issues like price supports, they can also be conducted at local levels and address issues such as loan repayments and credit policy.

In summary, the lessons from interventions for improving the capacity of host institutions to design development activities include the following:

-- Anticipate the impact that projects will have on management.

-- Analyze present strengths and weaknesses in management.

-- Design an appropriate management strategy when there is enough information to do so.

-- Design the project to encourage managers to learn and adapt.

-- Adopt a longer project time frame than usual when trying to improve management.

-- Design a monitoring and evaluation system to provide feedback.

4.4 <u>Interventions To Design Institutions To Sustain Project Benefits</u>

Enhancement interventions need to encourage host institutions to grapple with the long-term sustainability of a project. Interventions need to consider the best organizational means that

will provide benefits over the long run. In this sense, the project could be thought of as a scaffolding that the builder takes down when his work is finished, leaving a different or altered form to support the structure.

Consider this topic of planning for sustainability in more depth. Organizational design is frequently discussed in terms of the ability of the project to institutionalize the benefits it is producing or else to find some mechanism so that the benefits will continue to be provided beyond the life of the project. To be viable in the long run, institutions need to reflect the values of the various stakeholders. To do this, they may need to adapt their structures. Thus institutional development does not necessarily mean strengthening an existing organization; it means increasing its capacity to accomplish its goals, which may involve changes in its form.

The cases provide several instances in which the interventions considered sustainability and institutional development. The project in Senegal had to work with private sector organizations preparatory to turning the project's credit activities over to them. The reason for this was that AID had encouraged the Government to make this transition to the private sector. Managers, however, found they had good reason to worry whether the private sector would support the goals of the credit program and whether they would be willing to provide credit to poorer farmers who were often credit risks. As a result, the project managers provided incentives to private organizations to get them to combine development goals with profit making. They give their support only to those private organizations that promise to assist all farmers with credit, rather than only those who are the best credit risks.

Another strategy projects can use to sustain project benefits is to work with and train local community organizations to assume the activity. Frequently local agencies and communities fail to continue project benefits after assistance is over, even when they find those benefits of value. The reason can be as simple as a failure to make plans to maintain the project; it can be because of a lack of resources; or it can be that no one has a sufficient stake in or ownership of the project to continue it. One strategy was tried in Zaire, where project authorities offered technical assistance and training to local organizations so that they could continue the project after donor funding ended.

In Senegal, the Regional Development Authority overseeing the project is also trying to develop the capacity of local farmers' groups to assume eventual responsibility for the project activity. Specifically, they are trying to get farmers to accept financial responsibility for repairs and maintenance by setting up a revolving fund. In the face of farmer resistance, the

agency is adopting a selective and flexible policy to accustom them to the idea. They are collecting information that will provide them with estimates of which farmer groups are best able to take out private loans. If they default, the agency has a policy of forgiving them, but only if they accept management training. Thus they are trying to be firm yet flexible in demonstrating to local groups how to get farmers to repay credit. They have set clear expectations and are accepting good faith efforts.

4.5   Interventions To Improve Internal Management

Sections 2 and 3 on project and program management strategies addressed three kinds of management systems: information, financial management, and personnel systems. Project interventions, insofar as they have been concerned with management enhancement at all, have usually provided technical assistance and training in these areas. The approach of project interventions has been to offer skill building for individuals based on techniques that have proven effective in Western nations. The cases document that training and technical assistance in these areas are critically important but that certain approaches to training and technical assistance are more useful than others.

The evaluators note the need for more training in areas where new technologies are being introduced. For example, the Senegal project unit had a sound accounting system but the system was not implemented well because the staff was not trained to use it. The demands on training were compounded, however, because the system was turned over to local organizations, many of whose members were not literate.

The cases document that training in general skills is of limited value while hands-on or job-related training would be more useful. Training that is closely related to the tasks that staff are asked to do has always been more successful than general skill training. Such training would be offered on-site, would join teams of people from the same organization to focus on their tasks, and would relate the training and technical assistance to problems in the immediate local setting.

The evaluators suggest a second important qualification to the kinds of training usually offered. Those who are trained need followup support rather than a single exposure to training. Evaluators of the Senegal, Liberia, and Niger cases each mentioned the importance of providing followup support to trainees. This could be a second round of training, but ideally it would take the form of on-the-job visits and consultations. Without such followup, the initial investment in training can be lost.

A third lesson is that training should be monitored. Managers frequently keep records of who signs up for training,

but this form of monitoring does not indicate how much was learned or how effective the training was. Two of the evaluations stressed the importance of monitoring such results. In the Kenya case, several faculty were sent to the United States for training. The college management staff made a particular effort to visit them to learn how they were doing; as a result, the training was far more effective than is often the case. And the evaluators in the Niger case briefly mentioned that it would have been useful if management had been able to verify whether field agents had actually learned anything from their training.

Several interventions tried to improve local financial management systems. There is mixed evidence about their value. As noted, projects and host program agencies usually had limited and inadequate financial management systems and found training useful in improving their accounting and budgetary skills. At the same time, AID often imposed unnecessarily complex regulations for ongoing program needs in these situations. The dilemma is illustrated by the Niger case. Project accounting was so poorly done that changes in credit, inventory, and distribution operations were necessary. Yet the evaluators believed that some of the requirements were too rigorous and were designed more around AID's needs than the needs within Niger's administration. They particularly note that the requirements have absorbed a great amount of staff time and that broader institutional development issues have been "eclipsed."

Another intervention strategy is for donors to assume some of the financial management tasks. Again the evidence of the value of this approach is mixed. In several instances, such as the Lesotho case, the project retained its elementary bookkeeping practices. The Mission itself carried out the rigorous reporting procedures rather than imposing them on the project. This approach apparently worked in this case because the local accounting system appeared to be adequate for projected needs. This two-pronged approach was less successful in Kenya and Senegal. In Kenya, most of the financial problems derived from purchases for which AID was responsible rather than those managed by local authorities. In Senegal, a three-tier system was set up: AID spent one part of the money, the Regional Development Authority spent some, and the local project office had discretion over a fund to purchase small items. Providing some discretion to the local project office was very valuable in giving them more experience in using funds. At the same time, because AID retained authority over some of the funds, the local authorities did not gain enough experience with cost estimation procedures to develop a good monitoring system of their own.

4.6 Interventions To Enhance the Ability of Organizations To Relate to Their Environments

The ability of interventions to enable host institutions to relate more creatively to their environments revolves around the sensitivity of expatriate staff to local needs and cultural norms. With the exception of some of the expatriates brought in to provide technical assistance in the Kenya project, the staff involved in providing assistance in these projects were generally sensitive to local needs and interests. In Kenya, the expatriates arrived with inappropriate expectations and focused on doing the job rather than working with others to assist them in doing it. In retrospect it was unnecessary to hire teachers at the doctoral level, and recruiting efforts failed to accurately describe project needs. In Zaire, project authorities took particular care to assemble the host officials and expatriates in common facilities and to encourage socializing, sharing, and team spirit.

Interventions can also help host managers adapt to their environments by providing technical assistance in the form of research studies. In several of the projects, experts conducted studies on a particular problem and then turned the results over to local officials. In Senegal, such a study was done on health problems; in Lesotho, a study of grazing was made and used as the basis for some of the project activities. The evaluations do not indicate if local staff assisted in the studies, a practice that would have enhanced their own capacity eventually to conduct such studies.

5. PROPOSITIONS BASED ON LESSONS LEARNED

5.1 Leadership

1. If managers have little authority over those on whom they depend, they will need to supplement traditional management routines with leadership skills and rely on informal and interpersonal relations to implement an activity.

2. If a deputy manager is placed in charge of routine administrative actions, then the principal official will be freer to exercise leadership and interact with those outside of the project.

3. If those giving technical assistance use it as a chance to model effective leadership, host officials can learn many subtle aspects of leadership that are hard to impart through training.

4. If technical assistants work closely and socialize with host officials and are sensitive to their views, they can be more effective in modeling effective leadership.

5. If training includes attention to management and leadership, it will be more useful to trainees, many of whom proceed into management positions.

5.2 Project Design

1. If project goals are broadly and flexibly defined, managers can adapt the project as new problems and opportunities arise.

2. If management improvement or institution building is an important project goal, it is necessary to adopt a longer time frame than 5-6 years before a judgment is made about project success.

3. If goals are translated into immediate objectives, the latter can easily replace the long-term goals. A compromise is to design a sequence of objectives in light of the broader goals.

4. If managers are serious about consulting with local groups about project goals, they need to be open to adjusting the goals.

5. If the community resists project goals, it may be possible to use the project to demonstrate several alternative technologies and allow local groups to select the appropriate ones.

6. If project designs deal with the impact of new activities on management, the projects will be more effective.

7. If designs examine the strengths and weaknesses in implementing organizations, they will have the basis for considering these.

8. If interventions are designed to be flexible, managers will have more opportunities to learn and adapt than if they are based on finely tuned designs.

5.3 Organizational Design

1. If project managers delegate some authority over project design to local organizations, the projects will be able to take local knowledge and interests into account.

2. If the project organization is autonomous, the project will have more freedom to work directly with local organizations than if it has to work through a ministry.

3. If community organizations are given some project responsibilities, they can assist with such difficult tasks as monitoring credit repayment and levying fines in a manner that is more acceptable to the community than if it is done by outsiders.

4. If responsibilities are delegated to local organizations or field units, the delegating authority will need to remain very supportive and willing to provide needed resources.

5. If a project is dependent on other agencies for supplies and support, it needs to establish some means to coordinate their efforts. They cannot assume that support will be automatic.

6. If coordinating groups are to be effective, members need some authority over the resources they are trying to coordinate.

7. If other organizations support neither the project goals nor collaboration, coordination may not be worth the risk of compromising project goals and placing extra demands on managers.

8. f a project site is physically remote, it is important to set aside funds for communication and travel to keep the project from being isolated and to attract competent staff.

9. If a special logistical unit is set up to handle supplies, it should be a fully professional unit, with its own staff and authority to make decisions.

10. If national ministry leadership supports reorienting programs around local needs, such reorientation will be more successful.

11. If local communities have strong organizations willing to press their demands, decentralization will be more effective.

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12. If regional and district units of a ministry are weak, then it may be preferable to set up an autonomous project organization.

13. If coordinating bodies have some control over the resources they are coordinating, they will be more successful.

14. If goals are broad, it will be easier to coordinate programs.

15. If managers are concerned with giving some project responsibilities to other organizations, they will need to be selective and work with them to ensure that they have the resources and are committed to project goals.

5.4 Management Systems

1. If staff are expected to spend time working in groups and communicating with each other, such actions will have to be encouraged and rewarded by managers.

2. If a project adds new responsibilities to an agency or field unit, it is necessary to expand its data-handling abilities. This is particularly the case if those new responsibilities include planning.

3. If a data system is designed as a sequence of steps, it will be easier to implement than one that tries to introduce extensive changes at once.

4. If data are to be used by several units for planning and monitoring purposes, they should all agree on the indicators and data units.

5. If job assignments are clear, workers will be more motivated to carry them out.

6. If rewards are to have any effect, they must be based on performance.

7. If measures of performance are to have any effect, they must be simple and easily gathered. Although measures of effect may seem preferable, measures of effort are easier and may be fairer in the long run.

8. If a financial management system is based on actual data needs rather than on a model of what a system should look like, it will be more appropriate and effective.

9. If extensive changes are made in information or financial management systems, managers will often need to promote the system to convince others of its usefulness.

10. If program agencies are to move toward servicing local agencies rather than running national programs, they will need to reorganize themselves around providing services. For example, they will need new data collection and analysis skills.

11. If program agencies are to service regional and local units, they will need to reorganize their internal organization so that their data analysis units are closely linked to their planning units.

12. If program agencies delegate planning but retain control over monitoring, they will improve their ability to tailor programs to local needs without losing control.

13. If a program agency adopts a planning and control system that decentralizes the planning functions, it can plan better and ease some of the pressures on central staff.

14. If training in management processes such as financial management and data collection are given in the form of hands-on, job-related training, it will be more useful.

15. If training is monitored to see what people have learned, the results can be used to improve and make the training more relevant.

16. If donors maintain control over some financial management activities, they may relieve local units of some burdens, but they will also limit what local units learn.

5.5 Relating Projects to Environments

1. If local groups are threatened by a project, they need to be included in its design and implementation to deflect their opposition.

2. If project decisions are apt to be controversial and hurt some groups, the project should retain ultimate authority so that it, rather than local groups, will take the blame.

3. If project authorities consult with local groups, listening and explaining, they will be more effective in gaining their cooperation.

4. If immediate and tangible benefits are included, projects will have more support in the community.

5. If village leaders and farmers are included in training, they will have more investment in the project and will spread the word to others. The training should be offered to a critical mass in each community.

6. If a person is assigned responsibility within a program agency for interpreting community needs, these are more likely to be considered than if no one has such respon- sibility.

7. If recruitment of expatriates emphasizes the importance of working closely with host officials and interacting with them socially, expatriates will be more effective in modeling management styles.

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